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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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INFO: ATHENS, NEA/CTI

RM/AN ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION BRANCH

FROM : Amconsul THESSALONIKI DEPARTMENT OF STATE DATE: Jan. 2, 1964

SUBJECT: EDA in Northern Greece - Post Election Assessment

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SUMMARY

In the elections of November 3, 1963, EDA elected 7 deputies to the Greek Parliament from Northern Greece. This was an increase of 2 over 1961, but a drop of 16 from 1958. In terms of votes, EDA polled 180,900 in 1963, 162,600 in 1961 and 261,500 in 1958; in percentages EDA obtained 14.6% of the votes in 1963 as against 12.7% in 1961 and 24.7% in 1958.

Thus, as expected, EDA improved its position in Northern Greece.

Relaxation of Gendarmerie control, disarmament of TEA units and the freedom granted EDA to campaign even in the "Restricted Areas" had been expected to enable EDA to carry out a vigorous campaign. The absence of international East-West tension and the favorable (often criticized by the Right as too lenient) attitude of the caretaker Government also was expected to help EDA.

With all these factors in its favor, EDA failed to improve its position as much as was expected. EDA itself expected to do far better. Rightists feared that it might repeat its 1958 performance of 24.7% of the vote. The Gendarmerie credited EDA with a probable

Encl: EDA Vote in Northern Greece, 1958-1963

GROUP 3
Downgraded at 12 year intervals, not automatically declassified.

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12 seats from the area in a pre-election estimate. The Consulate General expected EDA to elect 8-9 deputies instead of only 7.

The reasons for EDA failure in this area include (1) success of the CU campaign and PAPANDREOU's direct appeal to discontented EDA voters, (2) split in EDA leadership as to tactics and nomination of candidates, (3) selection of poor slates in certain areas, (4) a general failure to include labor leaders as candidates of the so-called party of the proletariat (most candidates were white collar workers, lawyers, doctors, etc.), (5) weaknesses in party organization in several nomi (the post-election charge that EDA gave votes to the CU does not appear to be substantiated), (6) lack of any real issues except to beat CARAMANLIS (which some saw as best accomplished by a vote for the CU instead of wasting a vote on EDA), (7) the worn out, thoroughly dead slogans used by EDA, and (8) certain past errors such as the alleged GLEZOS statement on Macedonia in Moscow earlier in the year.

In emphasizing EDA's apparent failure in the 1963 elections, it should be realized that the failure was in terms of expectations. Actually the EDA vote has increased steadily in Northern Greece as follows: 1950 - 10.31%, 1951 - 12.27%, 1952 - 12.73%, 1956 - ?, 1958 - 24.70%, but due to special factors, 1961 - 12.72%, and 1963 - 14.35%.

A. General

As predicted several times during the summer and prior to the elections, the EDA vote in Northern Greece increased over that obtained in 1961 (by 18,311 votes, 1.85% and 2 deputies). That it did not increase more is attributable to several general factors: (1) the CU campaign and Papandreou's direct appeal to the discontented EDA voters, (2) split in the EDA leadership as to tactics and nomination of candidates[1], (3) selection of poor candidates in several areas, and (4) weaknesses in party organization in several nomi.

The post-election charge made by local ERE circles that EDA voters were directed to vote for the CU does not appear to be substantiated by the facts. EDA conducted a vigorous campaign in the area. While at all times it left the door open for formation of a "Popular Front" from above, below or on purely local levels, there is no evidence that even one individual CU candidate made any deal with EDA. Since EDA ran slates in every nomos of the area, there was no place where the EDA voter could not vote for an EDA candidate. While some of the EDA candidates were poor choices, there is no evidence that poor candidates were chosen deliberately so that EDA voters would vote for the CU. In those areas where EDA obviously could not hope to elect any candidate, EDA actually polled a few more votes than it had in 1961 (Florina and Xanthi) or sustained insignificant losses (Kastoria and Rodhopi).

1. See, for example, CAS Report ESS 69 of October 22, 1963

EDA conducted vigorous election and fund raising campaigns in many areas of Northern Greece. It was highly successful prior to the elections in setting up all kinds of "front organizations" and in strengthening existing fronts[2]. It expanded its youth movement significantly to include 24 branches and some 5,000 members in Northern Greece[3]. Throughout the period EDA candiates were free to campaign throughout the area, and there were no instances of violence involving the Gendarmerie and EDA, though subsequent to the elections EDA made protests based on relatively insignificant incidents.

The failure of EDA to do better obviously was a most unpleasant surprise for its leadership. Leaving aside the rosy hopes of becoming the second party entertained briefly when the CU planned to abstain from the elections, EDA hopes never fell below 40 seats in the Parliament[4], and usually were in the range of 60 seats or better[5] in contrast to the total of 28 actually obtained.

B. Areas of Insignificant Gains or Losses

In six districts (Drama, Kastoria, Florina, Kavalla, Rodhopi and Xanthi), gains and losses were insignificant[6]. Given the freedom from interference existing in these elections as contrasted to the heavy pressure on EDA during the 1961 elections, the fact that the party failed to register substantial gains in these districts warrants some comment.

In Drama, leadership had been split, morale had been low and income had failed to cover expenses for many months. By early October, it was reported[7] that the EDA organization in Drama had fallen apart and was completely powerless, but that efforts would be made to reinvigorate it since EDA had elected two deputies from the nomos in 1958. These efforts apparently were made, but nullified in part by selection of a weak slate. The result was that EDA sustained only minor losses in votes compared to the vote obtained in 1961.

Kastoria and Florina have never provided EDA with a significant vote. The minor changes recorded in 1963 as against 1961 reflect a continuation of this situation. Organizationally and financially, EDA was very weak in both nomi.

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1. See CAS Report YS 77 of Sept. 27, 1963
2. See CAS Report EKA 4093 of October 7, 1963
3. See CAS Report YS 79 of October 2, 1963
4. See CAS Report EKK 206 of October 11, 1963
5. See CAS Reports YS 85 of October 10, YS 87 of October 14, and YS 96 of November 1, 1963
6. The losses were: Drama 300, Kastoria less than 100, Kavalla less than 50 and Rodhopi less than 20 compared to 1961. The gains were: Florina less than 300 and Xanthi less than 200.
7. CAS Report EKK 206 cited above

Similarly, EDA organization and finances in Rodhopi and Xanthi have been very poor in recent years and reports prior to the elections revealed little or no improvement in this situation.

Kavalla, however, is a different story. EDA polled 21,946 votes in 1958 and 16,237 votes in 1961 despite severe police harassment and repression. Its failure to get more than 16,206 votes in 1963 thus deserves special consideration. As of September 12, morale in the Kavalla EDA organization was fairly good under the tireless and dictatorial direction of its 1st Secretary, Sotiris BARBOUNAKIS, despite dissidence within the rank and file. The Nomos Committee was active, but finances were poor. One month later, EDA was reported[3] as strengthened organizationally and considerably more active. Weaknesses were still reported in finances and among women, youth and labor groups. It was noted also that too few really worked, while some remained dissatisfied.

EDA was damaged by the defection of Constantinos KONSTANTARAS to the CU and by the failure of the LAMBRAKIS incident and its aftermath to affect Gendarmerie morale in Kavalla. Finally, exclusion of TSAROUHAS from the EDA ballot in Kavalla (he was shifted to Serres) must have had some effect on the vote. As a result of all these factors, EDA failed to make a good showing.

C. Areas of EDA Gains

In other districts, EDA gains were as follows:

District	Vote
Thessaloniki B	More than 4,400
Serres	" " 4,000
Kozani	" " 3,400
Kilkis	" " 2,300
Halkidiki	" " 1,900
Evros	" " 1,800
Pierea	" " 1,200
Pella	" " 900
Emathia	" " 800

Explanation of these gains and why they were not even greater is as follows:

Though with some 20,600 votes, or 19% of the total, EDA made a far better showing in the Thessaloniki "B" District than it had in 1961 (16,200 votes or 15%), it failed by far to attain the 30,200 votes or 33% registered

1. CAS Report EKK 206 cited above
2. ConGen A-[illegible] of September 18, 1963
3. CAS Report EKK 206 cited above

in 1958. The increase over the 1961 vote appears to be attributable to good organization, active campaigning and the let-up in Gendarmerie and other repression. Failure to reach the 1958 level is understandable since at that time the discontented voter had little alternative outside of EDA to express his disapproval of the Government. Had EDA been able to obtain 19% of the vote nationally, it would have been a significant gain.

The gain of 4,000 seats in Serres appears to reflect the organizational ability of EDA candidate Vasileon EFRAIMIDES (Georgios TSAROUHAS, transferred from Kavalla to Serres, did little or nothing to promote his own candidacy or to aid the slate). Organizationally, until the eve of the elections, EDA had been weak in Serres, with poor morale, little activity and poor finances. Since discontented voters in most areas turned to the CU, it is surprising that EDA was able to improve its vote in Serres to 19,182 despite lifting of police harassment. In any case, it failed by a substantial margin to reach the 1958 level of 25,247 though the party succeeded in electing one deputy.

EDA was late organizing in Kozani with the result that it entered the pre-electorial period with little to show in the form of activity or finances. Furthermore, at the last minute EDA dumped Serafim KARASAVVAS, a former deputy, and instructed followers to give their preferences to Constantinos VERROS. The results, though showing a substantial gain, from 8,844 in 1961 to 12,240 in 1963, was well behind the 16,579 polled in 1958 and failed to provide enough for election of a deputy. (In fact, one CU candidate, Michael PAPACONSTANTINOU with 16,187 personal crosses, out-polled the entire EDA vote.)

In Kilkis, EDA entered the pre-electorial period with a weak organization, low morale, a record of little activity, and poor finances. By the beginning of October, however, EDA leaders were citing it as an example of good organization and successful recruitment of youth[1]. The EDA drive, however, came too late and the slate presented was not particularly interesting. As a result, though EDA increased its vote from 9,032 in 1961 to 11,387 in 1963, it fell well behind its 15,462 of 1958 and failed to elect a deputy.

The EDA slate in Halkidiki, though headed by former deputy Epaminondas RIGAS, failed to overcome the organizational weakness, poor morale and low state of finances which had plagued the nomos committee since 1961. Though the vote increased from 3,098 in 1961 to 5,025 in 1963, it was not enough to elect a deputy and was less than half the vote polled by EDA in 1958.

In Evros Nomos EDA polled 8,508 votes in this election as opposed to 6,701 in 1961 and 13,020 in 1958. Despite a strong slate, it failed to elect a deputy. Failure to do better appears to have been the result of poor organization, split leadership and poor financial condition of the Nomos Committee[2].

1. CAS Report EKK 206 cited above
2. CAS Report EKK 206 cited above, while reporting that Barbounakis described the Evros organization as "well developed and second only to Kavalla" with "village fiscal committees and increased party income" noted that Barbounakis' views were exaggerated.

In the nomi of Pieria, Pella and Imathia, EDA vote, though heavier than in 1961, was considerably less than in 1958. In all three, organization had been poor, finances low, and little activity had been noted until the electoral period. Election of one EDA deputy from Pieria Nomos resulted primarily from a last minute drive and considerable discontent in the area.

D. Areas of EDA Losses

Only in Thessaloniki A district did EDA register losses -- in terms of percentages (25.75% in 1963, as opposed to 28.60% in 1961 and 43.4% in 1958), in absolute votes (48,993 in 1963 as opposed to 51,993 in 1961 and 64,164 in 1958) and in seats (3 deputies in 1963 compared to 2 in 1961 and 5 in 1958).

Failure to poll more votes than in 1961 came as an unpleasant surprise for EDA. Past voting records had always given the party a heavy vote and often a plurality in national and municipal elections. Thessaloniki, after all, was where the Lambrakis incident took place and where Gendarmerie morale was most badly shaken. The City and Nomos Committees had been the most active in all of Northern Greece since the elections of 1961. Finances were in good shape[1], morale was high and all signs pointed to probable election of 4 and possibly 5 deputies from the city. Failure of the September 8 and October 20 EDA rallies in Thessaloniki had been discounted as indicating only that many EDA voters did not want to be seen publicly at party rallies.

Other estimates generally credited EDA with the capability of electing 3 to 4 deputies in the Thessaloriki A district.

Its failure to elect more than three deputies may have resulted from dissension within the local leadership and some desertion from EDA -- it appears to be fairly clear that at least some EDA followers failed to follow party instructions in the distribution of preference crosses and that certain EDA candidates not on the preferential list (allegedly including EVANGHELOS) campaigned for themselves instead of throwing their support to the candidates designated by the Party[2]. The CU also had a strong appeal in the city and undoubtedly cut into the EDA vote. In the last analysis, however, it is not really possible to determine with any exactitude the reason why EDA failed to do far better in 1963 than it did in 1961.

Robert S. Folsom
Consul General

1. CAS Report YS-96 of November 1, 1963
2. See CAS Report YS 95 of Nov. 6, 1963

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EDA VOTE IN NORTHERN GREECE
1958 - 1963

	1963			1961			1958		
	Vote	%	Seats	Vote	%	Seats	Vote	%	Seats
Thess A.	48,993	27.75	3	51,993	28.66	2	64,164	43.4	5
Thess B.	20,622	19.20	1	16,220	15.29	1	30,261	33.5	3
Drama	6,058	8.73	-	6,354	8.47	-	12,299	18.90	2
Emathia	9,995	16.40	1	9,103	15.09	-	12,590	26.1	1
Evros	8,508	10.35	-	6,701	7.65	-	13,020	17.7	2
Florina	2,253	6.34	-	1,894	4.91	-	3,145	9.60	-
Halkidiki	5,025	10.02	-	3,098	6.29	-	10,344	24.30	1
Kastoria	736	3.00	-	829	2.98	-	781	3.60	-
Kavalla	16,206	19.32	1	16,237	18.32	1	21,946	28.10	2
Kilkis	11,387	18.41	-	9,032	12.99	-	15,462	28.40	1
Kozani	12,240	10.96	-	8,844	7.81	-	16,579	17.1	1
Pella	7,562	9.77	-	6,642	8.6	-	14,967	23.8	2
Pieria	6,767	12.98	-	5,502	10.61	-	10,128	24.3	1
Rodhopi	2,572	4.40	-	2,591	4.51	-	5,131	11.70	-
Serres	19,182	13.32	1	14,947	10.17	1	25,247	20.80	2
Xanthi	2,812	6.09	-	2,614	5.55	-	5,505	14.20	-
Total	180,918	14.57	7	162,607	12.72	5	261,569	24.70	23

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